Interim Forest Management Plan

Property Identifiers

Property Names and Designations:	Ten Mile Wildlife Area Potato Creek Wildlife Area Washington Creek Wildlife Area	
County:	Rusk	
Property Acreage:	Ten Mile Creek Potato Creek Washington Creek	413 984 514
Forestry Property Code(s):	Ten Mile Creek Potato Creek Washington Creek	8640 8230 8800
Master Plan Date:	Ten Mile Creek: 09/14/1983 (Implementation Element) Potato Creek: 05/31/1983 (Conceptual Elements) Washington Creek: 05/24/1985 (Conceptual Elements)	

Part 1: Property Assessment

General Property Description

- Landscape and regional context
  The Ten Mile Creek Wildlife Area lies primarily within the North Central Forest Ecological Landscape with a small portion (SW) in the Forest Transition Landscape. The project is within the Chetek Plains (212Qb04) Land Type Association. The project landscape is one of forest transition – rolling, open grassland with scattered small patches of mixed aspen, oak and pine. A freshwater spring pond and cold water stream (class III trout) with associated cattail, wild rice marsh and tamarack swamp bisects the property.

  The Potato Creek Wildlife Area is within the North Central Forest Ecological Landscape and the Pikes Peak Moraines (212Xe04) Land Type Association. The project landscape consists of approximately 40% northern mixed forest, 30% upland grass and brush and 30% alder, sedge meadow and marsh. A slow, hard, warm water stream which is flanked by wetlands of cattail, sedges, alder and floating bog bisects the property.

  Washington Creek Wildlife area is within the North Central Forest Ecological Landscape and the Chippewa-Flambeau Plains (212Xd04) Land Type Association. The project landscape consists of a shallow water impoundment with associated matrix of cattail, sedge and floating bog, with surrounding uplands of mixed aspen and oak. Recent improvements are redirecting the uplands adjacent to the flowage as an oak-grass type to benefit nesting waterfowl.

- History of land use and past management
  The Ten Mile Creek Wildlife Area was established in 1949 and is managed as a waterfowl production area and public hunting grounds.

  The Potato Creek Wildlife Area was established in the early 1950's as a waterfowl production area and public hunting grounds. Extensive acreage was inundated with the construction of a low level dam, but after 8 years of washouts and marsh deterioration, the structure was removed. Several runoff ponds were constructed and extensive grassland habitat (waterfowl nest cover) is managed through periodic rotations of prescribed burning. Peak recreational use occurs during the spring and fall migration periods.

  The Washington Creek Wildlife Area was established in 1955 as a waterfowl production area and public hunting grounds. A low head dam was constructed in 1957 and replaced in 2011.

Site Specifics

- Current forest types, size classes and successional stages.
  See Forest types listed below for each property.

- State Natural Area designations

There are no State Natural Areas on these properties.

- High Value Conservation Forests (HCVF) or other resources/natural community types limited in the landscape
  Older age classes are currently underrepresented in the local landscape

- Biotic Inventory status

Biotic Inventory has not been completed on these properties.

- Deferral/consultation area designations

There are no Deferral or Consultation sites designated on these properties.

- Rare species (WI state status)
  There are several rare wildlife species known from these properties and adjacent waterways. An NHI screening will be conducted prior to all future management activities.

  Ten Mile Creek Wildlife Area:
  Listed species that are present includes: Two birds, one reptile, one mammal and one minnow.

  Potato Creek Wildlife Area:
  Listed species that are present includes: Three birds, two reptiles and one mammal are present.

  Washington Creek Wildlife Area:
  Listed species that are present includes: Two birds, two reptiles, one mammal, three mussels and five insects are present.

- Invasive species

  At Potato Creek Wildlife area the entire drainage is heavily infested with common carp, which enter the creek at the Potato Lake outlet during the spring runoff. Many of the

larger individuals die-off in mid to late summer as water quality (02, temperature and depth) deteriorates.

Washington Creek Wildlife Area has an early stage (localized) infestation of Spotted Knapweed Centaurea maculosa, which is being treated with IPM (beetle/weevil) introductions.

- Soils
  The characteristic landform patterns at Ten Mile Creek include a gently rolling matrix of outwash plains, stream terraces and flood plain. The soils are predominantly poorly-drained, hydric, organic (peat) and stratified sandy loams of the Seelyeville, Markey, Bowstring Muck and Loxley Mucky Peat (depression) types.

  The characteristic landforms at Potato Creek are terminal moraine and outwash plain deposits which are bisected by a slow, shallow, hard, warm water stream. The primary soil types are Seelyeville, Markey, Newood, Very Stony Cathro and Crystal Lake. Crystal Lake and Newood are well drained, lacustrine, silt-loam and till deposits. All others mentioned are poorly drained and hydric.

  The characteristic landform patterns at Washington Creek Wildlife Area are rolling, pitted outwash plain and stream terrace. The predominant soils are Seelyeville, Markey and Chetek Sandy Loams. They are primarily organic (peat), poorly drained and hydric – with the exception of Chetek Sandy Loam, which is underlain by sand and gravel (outwash) deposits and excessively drained.

- Property Forest Types

  The Ten Mile Creek Wildlife Area consists of:
  - 18 acres of Swamp Conifer (100% of the forested area) in the 5-9 inch size class. This stand originated in 1930.

  The Potato Creek Wildlife Area consists of:
  - 234 acres of Northern Hardwoods (54% of the forested area).
  - 125 acres of Aspen (29% of the forested area) with 91 acres in the 5-11 inch size class and 34 acres in the 0-5 inch size class. 74 acres in the 20-30 year age class, 38 acres in the 30-40 year age class, and 13 acres in the 60-70 year age class.
  - 31 acres of White Birch (7% of the forested area) in the 0-5 inch size class. This stand is in the 20-30 year age class.
  - 15 acres of Tamarack (3% of the forested area) in the 0-5 inch size class. This stand is in the 80-90 year age class.
  - 14 acres of Black Spruce (3% of the forested area) in the 5-9 inch size class. This stand is in the 80-90 year age class.
  - 11 acres of White Cedar (3% of the forested area) in the 5-9 inch size class. This stand is in the 110-120 year age class.

  The Washington Creek Wildlife Area consists of:
  - 75 acres of Oak (43% of the forested area) in the 5-11 inch size class. This stand is in the 80-90 year age class.
  - 58 acres of Aspen (34% of the forested area) with 48 acre in the 0-5 size class (20-30 year age class) and 10 acres in the 5-11 inch size class (70-80 year age class).
  - 40 acres of Black Spruce (23% of the forested area) in the 0-5 inch size class. This stand is in the 80-90 year age class.

Cultural and Recreational Considerations

- Cultural and archeological sites (including tribal sites)

  At Ten Mile Creek Wildlife Area a highly-productive stand of wild rice occurs on the Ten Mile Creek marsh. There are two archeological sites and one historic site on the property. Management activities which avoid disturbing these sites are conducted accordingly.

  The stream at Potato Creek Wildlife Area had a history of established wild rice beds – prior to the 1966 installation of a water control structure. The rice beds declined. The structure washed out in 1974 and was not replaced. The rice reestablished shortly thereafter but has declined since and is not considered a significant cultural or recreational resource on the project at this time. There is one archeological site on the project, which is managed in order to avoid disturbance.

  There are no known archeological or historic sites on the Washington Creek Wildlife Area. Current recreational use includes hunting, trapping, nature observation and snowmobiling.

Part 2: IFMP Components

Management Objectives:

The management objective of these properties is to maintain early successional species, such as aspen, which greatly benefit ruffed grouse, American woodcock, beaver, and many other species of Wisconsin wildlife. Providing a diversity of age-classes within the aspen type will also enhance the value of the property for wildlife. The northern hardwood stands will be managed by single-tree selection which will create an uneven-aged stand. Promotion of the regeneration of mast producing trees while maintaining a diversity of species is important. Snags, nesting and cavity trees will be left uncut within these stands. Small pockets of aspen inclusions will be regenerated to aspen whenever possible.

Property Prescriptions:

Timber management activities on all of these properties will be subject to the approval of the property's Wildlife Biologist. General Silvicultural Prescriptions for the properties will be conducted as stated below for each forest type.

Aspen: These stands will be maintained by coppice harvests (even-aged management). The target rotation age for these stands will be 40-60 years, influenced by factors such as site conditions, size of harvests, and

accessibility. Age-class diversity will be maintained by reducing harvest unit size and harvest intervals. Snags, high-quality cavity, mast, and conifer tree species will be left uncut where appropriate as well as green tree retention areas.

Northern Hardwood: These stands will be managed by selection harvests (uneven-aged). This will improve stand quality and promote regeneration by the removal of low quality trees and releasing crop trees following the recommended stocking guidelines. Canopy gaps will be created to favor less shade tolerant species such as white ash, birch, oak, and basswood. This will add diversity to the stands. Hemlock, cedar, and white pine will be favored as retention trees, as well as snags, den trees, large coarse woody debris, and mast trees.

Swamp Hardwood and Swamp Conifer: These stands will be managed by seed tree, shelterwood, or coppice harvests (even-aged). The type of harvest will be determined by site conditions and accessibility. Seasonal restrictions will also need to be considered. Snag, den tree and large coarse woody debris will be favored as retention components.

Oak: These stands will be managed for oak utilizing commercial thinning's followed by a final regeneration harvest (even-aged).

White Birch: These stands will be managed by seed tree or shelterwood harvests (even-aged).

White Cedar: These stands will be passively managed.

Approvals:

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Regional Ecologist Date

_____

Forester Date

_____

Property Manager Date

_____

Area/Team Supervisor Date